لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

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NOVEMBER 1981—NABUWWAT 1360

EDITOR
M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD, was born in 1835 in Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the false Religious Philosopies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visit from Christ as he had been gathered to his fore-fathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world.

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He initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement, to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the Religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter by means of His signs, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellence of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendenies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences for their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good-will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

He passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor-ud-Din. After his death in 1914, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Head of the Movement. During his 52 years long leadership, he organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965 the electoral college named with one accord, Sahibzada Mirza Nasir Ahmad as Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquires may be addressed to the nearest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

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The Review of Religions

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assuraunce to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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Notes : Cheques and drafts should preferably be drawn on a Pakistani bank. In case a bill or cheque is drawn on a foreign bank, a collection charge of 50 cents for U.S.A. and 25 N.P. for U.K. should be added to the amount of subscription.

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

RABWAH, PAKISTAN

Vol. LXXVI November 1981—Nabuwwat 1360 H.S. No. 11

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A Few Verses from the Holy Quran*

The question why angels are not visible is irrelevant, for angels are, like God, imperceptible through our physical senses, so that our physical eyes are not able to behold them. Believing in the existence of God, can we behold Him with our physical eyes? But it would not be correct to say that they cannot be perceived at all. For those gifted with spiritual insight do behold them with their spiritual eyes in their visions, often in a state of wakefulness, and hold converse with them and gain diverse types of knowledge from them. I call to witness the Being Who holds my life in the hollow of His hand, and Who leaves not a lying impostor without humiliation and chastisement, that I am entirely truthful in stating that I have many times seen angels in my visions and have learnt things from them and have been informed by them accurately concerning past and future events. How can I then say that no one can see angels? Indeed they can be seen, but with eyes ohter than physical eyes. As those who deny the existence of angels laugh at statements like those made here, those

*Continued from the Review of Religions, October 1981 issue.

gifted with spiritual insight weep over their disbelief. Were any of these people to spend some time in the company of the spiritually enlightened, they may gain experience of visions and be convinced, but such people suffer from arrogance which does not permit them to come in search of truth in a spirit of humility and lowliness.

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The question why we cannot observe or percieve the activities or functioning of angels is at a par with the previous qustion. As an obstructed one is unable to see angels or to see God and has to rely solely on his thinking ond reasoning, by the same token he cannot percieve the activities of angels which are entirely spiritual. A fable is relevant here. A blind person denied the existence of the sun, saying: I have tried to catch hold of the sun but I cannot find it anywhere. Thereupon the sun admonished him: You cannot catch hold of me, O blind one, for I am beyond the reach of your arms. But pray that God may bestow sight on you, and then you will see me with your eyes.

It may be asked, if angels regulate and administer affairs then how is it that many of our designs come to fruition and many matters are settled in accordance with our plans and remedies? The answer is that our plans and remedies are also affected by the suggestions, inspirations, and interventions of angels. Whatever angels are, by the command of Allah, deputed to bring about, they achieve through persons and things which are by nature prone to accept and comply with the suggestions of angels. For instance, should it be the divine command that a field or a village or a tract should receive rain the angels, through their persuasive efforts, move the clouds to the desired spot and regulate the falling of the rain according to the quantity, quality, limit and estimate that has been determined. The clouds possess all those qualities and characteristics which, having regard to its passive and elemental state can be present in a lifeless, senseless body which has no volition of its own. The function of the angels is to regulate and distribute; that is why they are called

regulators, distributors. The suggestions and inspirations made by the angels are in accord with nature. For instance, the inspiration they convey to the chosen servants of Allah, they cannot convey to others ; indeed, they do not pay any heed to others. Thus everyone derives benefit from angelic suggestions according to his capacity, and is helped in respect of the art or science in which he is interested. When Allah, the Exalted, wills that a person's bowels be opened with a certain drug or medicine, the angel assigned for the purpose puts in the mind of the physician to prescribe that drug or medicine for the patient, which he does. Then with the urging of the angels the patient's system tolerates that drug, and the angels carry the effects of the drug to the relevant parts of the body and the harmful matter begins to move. Thus God, the Most High, of His great wisdom and perfect power, has both safeguarded the system of overt arts and sciences and has not permitted His divine control and possession to be relaxed. If God, the Exalted, had not retained such minute control over the various conditions affecting the preservation and destruction of His creation, He would not have been accounted God, nor would His unity have been perfected.

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With all that, it is true, God has not willed that all these mysteries should become patent in this world, for had they been patent there would have been no spiritual merit in believing in them. For instance, if God bad been visible to physical eyes or angels could have been observed while discharging their functions, the knowledge so gained would have been added to the knowledge that man gains through his physical senses and experiments. In such case belief in these matters would not be a means of attaining salvation as belief in so many other matters of fact is not relevant to salvation. We acknowledge the existence of the sun and the moon and of numerous species of animals on the earth and diverse kinds of herbs and minerals, and systems of rivers and mountain ranges, but does such acknowledge-

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ment import any spiritual merit or help to strengthen our communion with God? By no means. Then how is it that a person who believes in angels and has faith in the existence of heaven and hell, accepts the setting up of the scales on Judgement Day, believes that the righteous will be separated from the wicked, believes in divinely revealed books, and in the advent of Prophets and Messengers, and in the Resurrection, and in God, the one, without associate, will be deemed worthy of salvation in the sight of God? Be sure, dear ones, the reason for it is that such a one believes in God, Who is for him yet unseen, and accepts as true all that His Book reveals concerning the unseen, and is thereby accounted righteous, right thinking and obedient in the sight of Allah, and is forgiven and exalted on account of such righteousness. Mere knowledge has no relevance to salvation. On the day of Judgement, when the unseen will become overt, would it procure deliverance for anyone if he were to say: I now believe in this heaven and hell that I see spread out before me, and in these angels standing in rows, and in these scales in which deeds are being weighed and in the Lord of the worlds who is judging the world? Indeed not; the reason being that he would have seen all that was unseen before and would have missed the opportunity of acquiring spiritual merit which is open only to those who, in the absence of clear and irrefutable proof, believe in consequences of deductions made from probabilities. Those who are infatuated with philosophy fail to reflect that if knowledge of the Divine Being, of angels, of Resurrection, of heaven, of hell, of prophethood and revelation had been as clear and demonstrable as mathematics, engineering and protions of physics and astronomy, the former would have had as little relevance to salvation as the the latter. The essence of salvation is that it is the loving grace of Allah, the Glorious, which is made available to the righteous, the truthful, the sincere believers distinguished by perfect loyalty who believe on the basis of

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probability. What degree of righeousness, truth and sincerity is proved and established by acknowledgement of the truth of the principles and formulae of pure and applied sciences? As we admit that half of four is two, so does an errant wrongdoer. There are millions of things in the world whose existence we acknowledge as a fact, without the least doubt, but that does not win for us any spiritual merit. That is why God, the Most High, does not show His signs through His Prophets in such demonstrable fashion as the ignorant ones have always demanded. Those whose capacities are obstructed are thus further tried by their own ignorance. The Quran shows that the opponents of the Holy Prophet demanded that as proof of his truth all the dead of Arabia may be revived, or that the Holy Prophet should ascend unto heaven and should come down with a book that they should read. They did not realise that if truth were to be established by such demonstrations what would distinguish the hereafter from this life, and how could acceptance of truth under such conditions be described as faith? Does any sane person refuse to acknowledge clearly established facts? The whole basis of the so-called philosophic approach is false. They desire that everything in the sphere of faith should be comprehended within the scope of palpable, demonstrable branches of learning; and that angels, heaven, hell and the very existence of the Divine Being should be as factually determined and demonstrated as the existence of so many of the treasures of the earth, vegetable and mineral has been established by scientific research. But how could that which God, the Exalted, has from the beginning, decreed as part of faith and thus a means of attainment of salvation by man become, contrary to divine design, so determinable and demonstrable? When, however, a seeker advances from the stage of faith to the stage of spiritual insight, then all these matters become self-evident and become demonstrable to an even lager degree than methematical truths. For mathematical demonstration often

proceeds upon the basis of assumed propositions, but spiritual truths, in the stage of spiritual insight are shorn of all fancies and doubts, and can be demonstrated as conclusively as anything else, and in manner and at a level which nothing else can approach.

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However, man is not attracted to these methods of investigation and research and desires to arrive at the stage of absolute certainty through means not appointed for that purpose by the eternal divine law of nature, like one who should place a sweet over his eyes to test its taste, or should close his eyes and wish to see through his ears. But one should keep in mind that in demanding belief from His servants at the stage of faith God does not impose an unreasonable burden upon His servants. To induce their acceptance He has put forward excellent arguments by careful consideration of which a reasonable person can arrive at a stage of certainty. Though at the stage of faith belief in God is belief in the unseen, yet reflection over the Quran would reveal a wealth of persuasive arguments in support of the existence of the Maker of the universe. In the same way though we cannot diliver angels into the hands of a disbeliever nor can we show him angels occupied in the carrying out of their functions, but a seeker after truth will be convinced of the need of angels on careful observation of the delicate workings of the universe. If the seeker should not be a believer in God, we would first furnish him with proof of the existence of God. We shall then prove the imperative that not a leaf can stir without the command and will of God. We shall next establish that the faculties and capacities needed for the appreciation of the delicate motivation which inspires divine beneficence towards His creatures through the sun, moon, stars, clouds, winds, etc., and for placing everything in its proper order, have not been bestowed upon these latter, as we have already shown. We have also shown that God always acts through agencies and

instruments, and invests these agencies and instruments with faculties and capacities requisite for the proper discharge of their functions. For instance, He bestows understanding where understanding would be needed, and determination where determination would be required. He employs man where man in needed, and an animal where an animal is wanted. Foresight is bestowed where foresightedness is requisite. Once all this is established little doubt is left of the need of angels. For matter of faith only such degree of proof is required as would not demand credulity beyond reason, so that spiritual merit of faith in the unseen may still be preserved. If the existence of angels could be proved by handing over, as it were, there would then be no room for faith and the scheme of salvation would be frustrated. So, reflect and try to understand and be not in a hurry. (Aaeenahi Kamalat-i-Islam, pp. 181-284, footnote).

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As our bodies and physical faculties are affected and influenced by the sun, moon and other planets, in the same way the angels affect our hearts, minds and spiritual faculties according to our varying capacities. Whatever has the potential of becoming something valuable, be it a handful of clay or a drop of water that enters an oyster shell, or a sperm-drop that enters the womb, becomes under the spiritual care of angels a ruby, sapphire, emerald, or a pearl of great price, or a human being possessing great qualities of head and heart. The Quran treats the subject of angels in a simple comprehensible manner, which carries conviction. Reflection over the Quran reveals that for the inner and outer development of man, indeed for the development of everything in the universe, certain types of agencies or instruments are needed. There are also clear indications in the Quran that of the pure spirits called angels some have a special relationship with the heavenly regions and bodies. Some waft the winds, some cause the rain to fall, others promote various types of phenomena. No doubt some of these pure spirits have through their innate luminosity a relationship with

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the bright luminous stars and heavenly bodies. This is not the relationship that subsists between the body and the soul. These pure spirits have indefinable relationship with the bright stars by virtue of their spiritual light and luminosity, but that relationship is so strong that if a separation between them could be imagined it would radically affect the qualities of the stars. All stars continue to perform their respective functions under the secret urging of those spirits. In a manner, but only in a manner, these spirits are like souls for the planets and stars, as God, the Exalted, is like a soul for the entire univers. Separation between these spirits and the stars would wholly disrupt the latter.

No one has ever questioned that the stars and planets are constantly performing their function of developing and perfecting the universe. All vegetables, minerals and animals are affected day and night by the heavenly bodies. Even the most unenlightened peasant realizes that moonlight fosters the growth and sunlight promotes the ripening and sweetening of fruits, and that certain winds increase the yeilds of fruit trees. If then the external universe is being constantly fostered and developed through the functioning of these bodies, can it be doubted that its spiritual aspect is also affected and influenced by these luminous spirits which are in a manner related to the illumined bodies as the soul is related to the body?

It may strike a person as odd that any agency should be needed for conveying the light of revelation from Allah, the Exalted, to His holy Prophets. But reflection would show that there is nothing odd in this. Indeed it is in entire keeping with Allah's law the operation of which is plainly observeable respecting everything. We see that the Prophets also are dependent upon the same agencies in respect of the proper functioning of their bodies and physical faculties as the rest of the people. The eye of a Prophet, however bright and blessed, is unable, like the eye of a common person, to see without the light of the sun or of some substitute of it; nor can a Prophet hear without the agency of air. One

must acknowledge, therefore, that the spirituality of a Prophet is also affected by the bright pure spirits of these planets. Indeed it would be reasonable to assume that it must be affected to a much larger degree than would be the case with the common people, for the purer and more perfect the faculty of the recipient the stronger would be the degree of the benefit received. The Holy Quran afrirms that these stars and planets have a spirit related to their material masses, and as their bodies possess certain characteristics which affect everything on the earth in accord with its capacities, in the same way their luminous spirits also possess diverse characteristics which, by the command of the All-Wise, affect the inner aspect of everything in the universe. These luminous spirits assume material forms in which they appear to persons of the highest spirituality. This is not rhetoric. This is a truth which a seeker after truth and wisdom must acknowledge. Once we admit that everything on the earth is being developed under the influence of the heavenly bodies, and this is confirmed by our observation that everything, whether vegetable, mineral or animal, exhibits clear signs of such development, we are in consequence consitrained to acknowledge that in the development of spiritual faculties and the progressive illumination of the heart and mind these luminous spirits are directly concerned. It is in consequence of this concern that Islam teaches the existence of an agency, in a metapheric sense, between Allah, the Exalted, and His Messengers as an imperative, belief in which is a part of faith. Those, like the Aryas and Bramhos, who have not been able to appreciate this philosophy, have, out of their bitter hostility to Islam, put it forward as a basis of criticism that the Quran insists on angels as an agency between Allah and His Messengers. They do not realize that the divine law of development, the operation of which we observe all round us, is based on the same premise. Were not the Hindu Rishis, to whom, according to the Hindus, the four Vedas were revealed, dependent upon the emanations of the heavenly bodies for the proper development

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and maintenance of their physical faculties? Could they see with their eyes, without the aid of rhe sun; or could they hear without the aid of the air? The answer is bound to be in the negative, accompanied by an admission that they were dependent upon the aid of the heavenly bodies for their development and perfection. The Vedas do not reject the concept of angels. Indeed, they have gone too far in the direction of accepting and apprasing them, and have assigned to them a position equal to the Divine. Cast a glance at the Rig Veda and observe what emphasis it lays on the worship of the heavenly bodies and the elements, and how much space it allots to their praise, eulogy and glorification, and with what humility and submission they have been supplicated without avail! Not so the Quran. It has designated the luminous spirits that are related to the heavenly bodies and the elements somewhat like the soul is related to the body, as angels. It has not assigned to the luminous angels that are related to the bright stars and planets a position between the Divine Being and His Messenger whereby those angels may be deemed to possess or exercise any authority or choice. Their position with reference to the Divine is like that of a lifeless instrument in the hands of a living being which the latter employs as he pleases. That is why in some places every particle is designated an angel, for all these particles hear the voice of their Lord and do as they are commanded. For instance, every particle that occasions a change in the human system towards illness or health moves back or forward in accord with divine will and pleasure.

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It should be clearly apprehended that no kind of association with the Divine is involved in accepting the existence of such agencies as are described in the Quran, nor does it involve any denigration of tbe Divine. These are such mysteries related to spiritual insight and such points of wisdom as are inscribed on every page of the law of nature. The plentitude of divine power cannot be established without the comprehention of this system, nor can divine rule be effective

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without it. Unless every particle were an angel devoted to His obedience how can the entire cosmos work in accord with His will? If acceptance of the functioning of the heavenly angels in the spiritual sphere would operate to denigrate the Almighty status of the Divine, how is it that the acceptance of the functioning of the angels in the physical sphere, which is a facsimile of the spiritual system, does not involve the same consequence? The trurh is that the opponents of Islam, in consequence of their utter spiritual sightlessness have put forward objections to doctrines and teachings whose basis, distorted by idolatrous commentaries and expositions, is to be found in their own scriptures, and they have been impelled by their short-sightedness to apprehend a beautiful verity as a disfiguring falsehood.

It needs to be kept in mind that according to Islamic teaching the select from among the angels do not occupy a higher position than the select from among human beings. In fact the latter rank higher than the former. The employment of the angels as agents or instruments in the physical or spiritual systems does not signify a superiority on the part of the angels. According to the Holy Quran they are so employed as servants. (Tauzeeh Maram, pp. 33-45.)

Not all angels as we have already pointed out, are of the same rank and status nor do they all perform similar functions. Each angel is charged with a specific function. Every development that takes place in the world, every manifestation in action of a hidden design or power, the achievement of their respective purposes by souls and bodies are all affected by heavenly influences. Sometimes the same angel influences different capacities in different ways.

(Tauzeeh-Maram, pp. 67—68)

Not only can angels be seen in certain conditions but very often they indicate their function in conveying the divine word. (Barakat-ud-Dua. p. 21, footnote).

It is Allah's way that at the advent of a person charged

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with spiritual revival of mankind angels descend with spiritual light and that light illumines and strengthens eager hearts and by virtue thereof such people's comprehension of spiritual matters is increased. As the cause of the diffusion of this light is the advent of that person all spiritual insight experienced during his time is attributable to him.

(Ayyamus Sulh, p. 54, footnote)

Angels are so called as they are like the soul for the support and maintenance of heavenly and terrestrial bodies, and also because they serve as Messengers.

(Tauzeeh Maram, p. 33, footnote)

A Muslim is one who submits himself completely to the will of Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and offers the she-camel that is his ego to be salughtered in His cause, and makes it fall down on its face for the purpose, and does not lose consciousness of death for one moment. The sacrifice of animals prescribed in Islam is a reminder of this purpose and an urge towards attaining it and towards achieving the reality at which the seeker arrives at the end of his journey. It is thus incumbent upon every believer, male and female, who seeks the pleasure of Allah, the Loving, to realize this truth and to make it his or her goal. Everyone should impregnate his soul with it and should not stop or rest till the sacrifice is made to the Worshipful Lord. Let him not be content, like the ignorant and the blind, with the token external performance, but carry out the true purpose of the sacrifice with full understanding and in the spirit of righeousness. This is the stage where the search of the seeker terminates, and where the purpose of those gifted with spirtual insight is fulfilled, and all grades of righteousness are completed, and all stages of the purpose of the faithful and the elect are achieved, and the journey of the saints ends. When you arrive at that stage you will have carried your striving to the limit and will have achieved self-effacement. At that stage the tree of your effort will arrive at its full flowering,

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and the neck of your soul will reach the soft verdure of the garden of holinss and greatness, like the long-necked she-camel which extends its neck into the branches of a verdant tree. Thereafter is a succession of emotions and fragrances and manifestations proceeding from the Majesty of Unity, so that the remaining veins of humanness may be severed, followed by a spiritual resurrection and survival and attainment of divine nearness by the soul at rest, pleased with Allah and with whom Allah is pleased and which is completely lost in Allah. All this is to prepare the worshipper to receive the bounty of grace in his new life. The perfect one is then clothed in the robe of vicegerence from the Majesty of Unity, and is metaphorically dyed in the colours of divine attributes in token of the vicegerence. He then decends spiritually towards mankind to draw it towards spirituality and to bring it out of earthly darkness into heavenly light. Such a one is made heir to all the Prophets, the righteous the men of learning and wisdom, the luminaries enjoying nearness to God and under His guardianship who have passed before him. He is also invested with the learning of the ancients and the spiritual insight of his forerunners out of the men of vision and wisdom among the community as proof and token of his heirship. (Khutbah Ilhamiah. pp. 5-10)

God informed me in a revelation published in Baraheen-Ahmadiyyah concerning myself: I am about to appoint a vicegerent like Adam. Learning this, some of my opponents who found that all my particulars did not conform to their preconceived notions wondered in their minds: Lord, wilt Thou appoint as Thy vicegerant one who is creating disturbance and differences, by refusing to conform to the views of the recognised divines! God's response was: I know that which you do not know. This is God's revelation to me. There exist between me and my God such mysteries as are beyond the ken of the world. I have a relationship with God which I cultivate in secret and which is ineffable, and of which my contemporaries are unaware. This is the meaning

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of the revelation : I know that which you do not know.

(Baraheen Ahmadiyyah, Part 5, p. 63)

The apex of a person's spiritual development is that he should reflect the Divine. The verse : I am about to place a vicegerant in the earth ; also means the same. A true picture represents the original. That is why a picture reproduces exactly the limbs and features of the original. The Holy Prophet has said, and the Torah confirms, that God made man in His image. Here image means spiritual resemblance. When the light of the sun strikes a well polished mirror the mirror does not merely show a facsimile of the sun, it also reflects its qualities. For instance, the light of the sun is also reflected back and lights up other objects. The same is the case with the image of the spiritual sun. When a polished heart reflects its image, then like the sun its rays are also reflected and illumine other objects, as if the sun in all its glory had entered therein. (Haqeeqatul Wahy, p. 25.)

(the) Prophet (on whom be peace) was the Adam of the end of the world and the termination of its days. He was created like Adam, after every species of worms and wild animals and cattle, that is to say, every type of wrongdoer, disbeliever and world-seeker had been created, and also there had been created in the heavens the stars, the moons and the suns, that is to say, eager spirits from among the pure illumined ones. Then he created the Adam who is named Muhammad and Ahmad. He is the chief of the children of Adam, and the purest and most fortunate and the leader of created beings. It was he who was indicated in His word : Call to mind, when thy Lord announced to the angels : I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth. I call to witness the honour and glory of Allah that the phrase : Call to mind; points conclusively to this meaning, and so does the context of the verse, provided you are not stubborn like the Jews. Thus there is no doubt that he is the Adam of the last days and his followers are the spiritual progeny of this highly praised Prophet. This is indicated by the verse : We have

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bestowed upon thee abundance of every kind of good (108:2). Reflect, then, over its meaning and be not of the heedless. The spiritual evolution of our Holy Prophet began in the fifth millennium and achieved its apotheosis by the end of the sixth millennium. This is indicated by the verse : That He may cause it to prevail over every other religion (9 : 33 ; 48 : 29 ; 61 : 10). The explanation of it is that our Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) followed in the footsteps of Adam and the spirituality of Adam shone forth on the fifth day, for by then all that was needed as particles of his composition and as the basis of his temperament had come into being. The earth with all its created beings and the heaven with all its works was the basis of Adam's composition ; as if his matter progressed from the mineral to the vegetable and from the vegetable to the animal. Then on the spiritual side he progressed from the planetary condition to the lunar and from the lunar to the solar. All this progression indicated the evolution of the universe to the heights of the stage of humanity, as if man was at one stage mineral, at another vegetable and then animal, planet, moon and sun till on the fifth day all that his nature demanded of the terrestrial and heavenly faculties was combined together, by the grace of Allah, the best of creators. Thus the whole of creation was a perfect unity for Adam, or was a mirror for the being of him whom God had ennobled and honoured. Then God determined to make manifest in their perfection in one individual all these latent qualities. So the spirituality of Adam shone forth in its perfect glory in the last hour on Friday which was the sixth of the six days. Thus the spirituality of (the) Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) made itself manifest in the fifth millennium. But that was not the period of (the) apotheosis of his spirituality. It was the first step in that direction. It manifested itself in its perfection towards the close of the sixth millennium, that is to say, in the present age, as Adam was created towards the close of the sixth day, by the command of Allah, the best of creators. The spirituality of the best of Divine Messengers chose a

manifestation for its perfection and for the triumph of its light as had been promised by Allah in the Perspicuous Book. So I am that Promised Manifestation and that Covenanted Light. Believe, then, and do not be among the disbelivers. (Khutbah Ilahamiah, pp. 171-178.)

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What is the significance of the query of the angels : Wilt Thou place therein one who will create disorder therein? When God divided the heavens into seven stages and revealed to each stage its function (40 : 13) and the sixth day, which is the day of maximum good fortune, the day of Jupiter, drew towards its close, and the angels who had known from the purport of the verse just quoted the functions of the planet, and were aware that the planet of the plenitude of good fortune was Jupiter, perceived that Adam was not likely to be created that day, the greater part of it having passed, they imagined that Adam would be created during the period of Saturn and his temperament would be saturine, which predicates wrath and chastisement, and they concluded that he would be a source of trials and tribulations. Their query was thus prompted by speculation and they desired to know whether God intended to bring into being one who would create disorder and shed blood, and they reflected that they were pious and given to worship and glorification and free from every vice. They knew that they themselves had been created in the period of Jupiter. They were told : I know that which you do not know ; meaning that they did not know the time when God would bring Adam into being. God designed to create Adam in that part of the day of Jupiter which was most propitious, and that is the hour of the late afternoon of Friday. So Adam was created at that hour. That is why the Holy Prophet has directed that we should supplicate most profusely and earnestly between the afternoon Prayer Service and the sunset Prayer Service on Friday, as during that time there is a certain hour in which prayer is accepted. That is the hour of which even the angels were not aware. One born during that hour

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is named Adam in heaven, and is destined to initiate a great movement. So Adam was created at that hour. By the same token, the second Adam, that is to say, this humble one, was also allotted the same hour. The revelation vouchsafed to me: Thy collateral lines will be cut off and a beginning will be made with thee (Baraheen Ahmadiyyah p. 490); clearly indicates this. It is a wonderful coincidence that not only was I born towards the close of the sixth millennium, which bears the same relation to Jupiter as the last part of the sixth day of Adam bore to it. I was born on a Friday that fell on the day of the full moon.

If it is asked what is it that makes the last hour of Friday, before sunset, in which Adam was born, so auspicious, and why was this hour selected for the birth of Adam; the answer is that it is a characteristic of the system of planets devised by Allah, the Exalted, that towards the close of its own period each planet is effected to some degree by the characteristics of the planet that is next to it. As during the last hour of the day on which Adam was created, the night was approaching, that hour was to some degree affected also by the characteristic of Saturn, which was the dominating planet of the next day. So God created Adam during the last hour of Friday, so that he should partake of the characteristics both of Jupiter (beauty) and Saturn (might and glory). This is also indicated by the verse: Whom I created with my two hands (38 : 76). It is obvious that God has not hands like a human being. The expression "two hands" signifies the manifestation of both beauty and might. The verse, therefore, means that Adam combined both manifestations in himself.

As Allah does not desire the scientific system to be damaged He utilised in the creation of Adam the qualities of those planets also which He had created as a manifestation of His power. These planets have not been created merely for adornment, as the common people think. This is indicated by the word "protection" in the verse: We

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adorned the lowest heaven with lights and for protection (41. 13). This means that these planets are involved in the protection of the system of the universe, as drugs and food are involved in the maintenance of the health of man. But this does not mean intervention in the operation of divine power. These things can achieve nothing without divine command; their effect is all within divine control. They are like lifeless objects in the hands of a live being. The truth then is that the planets exercise an influence over the earth. The person who admits the effect of drugs and herbs, but denies the effects of the planets which are the primary locale of manifestations of nature, and its wonders and which have been described by God as a means of protection, merely proclaims his own ignorance. Such people consider this scientific system as amounting to associating partners with the Divine. They ignore the divine law that God has not created anything without purpose and effect. Then what is the purpose of the millions of stars with which the earthly heavens are studded? Divine affirmation that everything has been created for the benefit of man comples us to conclude that all these objects influence human life and culture. The ancient philosophers have avowed that in its earlier stages the earth was all corrugated and uneven and that God levelled it under the pull of the planets.

All these planets are not placed in the lowest heaven. Some are at great distances. Jupiter is visible and yet it is in the sixth heaven, and Saturn, also visible, is in the seventh heaven. That is why it is named Zuhl, for Zuhl signifies great distance. The different heavens are different regions which are distinguishable from each other on account of their characteristics. It is an error to say that there is no sky. However far one probes into space, no vacuum is discovered.

As the first Adam possessed the qualities both of Jupiter (beauty) and of Saturn (might), in the same way the Adam who was born towards the close of the sixth millennium also possesses both these qualities. His first step heralds the coming to life of

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the dead, and his second portends the death of the living, that is on the Judgment Day. God has decreed during his time signs of mercy as well as those of retribution, so that the qualities both of beauty and might may be demonstrated. God's warning that in the latter days the sun and the moon will be darkened at the same time, the earth will subside at different places, mountains will be blown up, are all retributive signs. The Holy Quran gives similar indications concerning the period of the rise of the Christian powers. It is recorded that at that time heavens may well nigh be rent asunder and the earth may suffer subsidences, etc., causing widespread ruin. In short, the second Adam also combines in himself qualities of beauty and might, and that is why He was created towards the close of the sixth millennium, and by that token this age is the age of Friday, and this period of the age is that of late afternoon.

The Fatiha provides on interesting indication in this context. It is a chapter that deals with the beginning and the end. It begins with the divine attribute of Providence and in the enumeration of divine attributes concludes with Master of the Day of Judgement. Appropriately to this the Eternal All-Wise had divided this Sura into seven verses, thus giving an indication of seven millennia as the age of this cycle of the universe. The sixth verse of the Sura is: Guide us along the straight path. This is an indication that the darkness of the sixth millennium will call for heavenly guidance, and those among mankind who possess righteous dispositions will supplicate God for a spiritual guide, namely the Promised Messiah. The Surah concludes with the seventh verse which ends with the word "dhalleen" meaning those who have gone astray. This is an indication that the Judgement Day will arrive during the period of the rise of those who have gone astray. (Tufah Golarviah, pp. 109-112, footnote.)

Adam came into being towards the close of the sixth day. At that time Jupiter was about to give place to Saturn. As among the qualities of Saturn are bloodshed and savagery,

the angels speculating that Adam would come into being under the influence of Saturn enquired: Do you design to place one in the earth who will create disorder therein? As man is aware of the effects of earthly objects and herbs, etc., in the same way heavenly creatures are aware of the effects of heavenly bodies and objects. (Al-Hakam, Vol. XII, No. 44, 26 July 1908, p. 3.)

I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth; seems to indicate the prior existence of a people. The Holy Quran says: We had created the Jinn before from the fire of a glowing blast (15:28). The Holy Prophet has said: God has ever been creating. This is the truth. For if we do not believe so, we would, God forbid, be guilty of denigrating God by implying that before the creation of Adam the divine attribute of creation was in abeyance. As the Quran describes divine attributes as eternal the saying of the Holy Prophet expounds the truth. The Quran would not have implied constant recurrence for divine attributes if creation had started only with Adam.

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(Al-Badar, Vol. 11, No. 24, 3 July 1933, p. 187)

It is possible that there may already be a people and God may create another; or, He may destroy a people and create another. Such an event is mentioned in the narrative of Moses. In Adam's time God had destroyed the previous peoples. When He created Adam He brought into being another people. It is not necessary for a vicegerent that a people should already exist. It is possible that Adam was the progenitor of a people who were designated successors of a people who had ceased to exist. God is eternal and is not subject to change, but man is not eternal and is subject to change. I too have been called Adam in my revelation.

When spirituality dies, that is to say the essence of humanity is destroyed, Allah, the Most High, creates another Adam, and thus there is a succession of Adams. Had it not been so, it would mean that God is not eternal but has

existed only for five or six thousand years, or that He was in abeyance prior to that period.

(Al-Badar, Vol. II, No. 24, 3 July 1903, p. 187)

The Quran does not teach that the age of the world is only six thousand years. This is the belief of the Christians. The Quran states that God said concerning Adam: I am about to place a Khalifah in the earth. A Khalifah is one who comes after another and succeeds him. This shows that there were people before Adam. He replaced them and was their successor. (Al-Badar, Vol. 1, No 14, 6 July 1905, p. 2)

We do not believe, nor do we follow the Torah in this respect, that the age of the universe is six or seven thousand years, that it began with the creation of Adam and that there was nothing in existence before then, as if God was in abeyance. We do not claim either that the whole of the human race that inhabits different parts of the earth today is descended from the last Adam. We believe that man existed before this last Adam also, as is indicated in the Quran. It says that God announced: I am about to place a Khalifah in the earth. Khalifa means successor. This shows that there were people before Adam too. We cannot say about the aborigines of Australia and America whether they are descendants of this last Adam or some previous one. It is stated by Mohyuddin Ibni Arabi that he saw in a vision someone performing the circuits of the House of Allah whom he took for Adam and whom he asked: Are you Adam? His reply was: Which Adam are you speaking of? There have been thousands of Adams.

(Al-Hakam, Vol. XII, No. 35, 30, May 1908, p. 5)

Will you place therein those who will create disorder? shows that the angels had had a vision of the disorder that the descendants of Adam would create. (Al-Hakam, Vol. XLVLL, Nos. 19-22, 21, and 28 May 1943 and 7 and 14 June 1943 p. 15)

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Punishment of Adultery in Islam

By Muhammad Zafrullah Khan

Recently a person who was found guilty of the offence of adultery was sentenced to flogging by the Sharia Court of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has appealed against the sentence to the Supreme Court of Pakistan which is called upon to determine whether under Islamic law adultery is punisheble with death by stoning or with flogging.

This situation has raised violent controversy among the jurists, lawyers and divines in Pakistan. The preponderance of opinion appears to support the sterner view. The question cannot, however, be determined merely by the counting of heads. Deep reflection of fundamentals is called for. The very integrity and reliability of the text of the Holy Quran are involved.

What does the Holy Quran itself lay down in that regard? The following are some of the divine guarantees and assurances that need to be pondered:

Do not move thy tongue with the words of the revelation that thou mayest hurry over it. Upon Us rests its collection and its recital. So when We recite it, do thou follow its recital. Then upon Us rests the expounding there of (75 : 17-20).

Thus Allah, the All-knowing, the mighty, the Wise, the Source of the Holy Quran has charged Himself with its collation and preservation. It follows therefrom that the entire text of the Holy Quran has been preserved intact without the diminution of an iota. To suggest otherwise would be inconsistent with divine guarantee.

This is reinforced by:

Surely, We Ourself have sent down this Exhortation, and We will, most surely, safeguard it (15 : 10).

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All through the centuries the Muslims have adhered firmly to the verity that the text of the Holy Quran is exactly as it was revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). No addition or subtraction is permitted or acknowledged. Some have, in our opinion erroneously, held that a number of the commandments of the Holy Quran have been abrogated by other commandments, but even they affirm that the abrogated verses and the abrogating verses all form part of the text of the Holy Quran, nothing has been left out.

We have been admonished: Will they not, then, meditate upon the Quran? Had it been from anyone other than Allah, they would surely have found much contradiction therein (4 : 83).

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This clearly rejects any idea of abrogation of Quranic commandments, for abrogation involves contradiction between that which is abrogated and that which abrogates. Then how did the concept of abrogation arise? A word of explanation may be helpful. The scriptures of earlier faiths, while they set forth fundamental concepts valid inrespect of all peoples and all times, also prescribed directions that were of temporary duration or limited application. In course of time part of that which was fundamental was forgotton or was overlooked or overlaid. The Holy Quran confirmed that which was fundamental, and revived that which had been forgotten or overlooked. That which was temporary or limited, and was no longer needed, was abrogated. That which was henceforth to be needed was substituted or added. This was set forth as follows:

Those ones from among the People of the Book and from among those who associate partners with Allah, who have disbelieved, desire not that any good may be sent down to you from your Lord. (They forget that) Allah chooses as recipients of His mercy whomsoever He pleases. Allah is Lord of exceeding bounty. Whatever (previous) commandment We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We reveal (in the Quran) one better than it or its like (2 : 106-107).

Thus some of the commandments contained in the

earlier scriptures, which were no longer needed or adequate, were abrogated or modified by the Holy Quran. No commandment of the Holy Quran itself was ever abrogated. Interpretation, explanation, exposition, directions with regards to the manner of carrying out of commandments continued to be revealed, but there was no abrogation.

From this position of certainty we advance one step further. For the purpose of the administration of justice what is the basic direcrion ? It is : *Judgement must be in accord with that which Allah has sent down.* Thus were the Jsws admonished, thus were the People of the Gospel adjured, thus was the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) most emphatically commanded :

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As regards the Jews, consider :

Surely, We sent down the Torah full of guidance and light. By it did the Prophets, who were obedient to Us, judge for the Jews and so did the divines and the jurists, for they were required to safeguard the Book of Allah, and because they were guardians over it. Therefore, fear not people but fear only Me ; and barter not My commandments for a paltry price. *Whoso judges not by that which Allan has sent down, these it is who are the disbelievers (5 : 45).*

In the Torah We had prescribed for them : A life for a life and an eye for an eye, and a nose for a nose, and an ear for an ear, and a tooth for a tooth, and equitable retaliation for othar injuries. Whoso waives his right thereto, it shall be an expiation for his sins. *Whoso judges not by that which Allah has sent down, these it is who are the wrongdoers (5 : 46).*

As regards the People of the Gospel, reflect over :

We caused Jesus son of Mary to follow in their footsteps, fulfilling that which was revealed before him in the Torah, We gave him the Gospel which contained guidance and light, fulfiling that which was revealed before it in the Torah, a guidance and an admonition for the righteous. *Let the People of the Gospel judge by that which Allah has sent down therein. Whoso judges not by that which Allah has sent down, these it is who are the*

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rebellious (5 : 47-48).

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was commanded :

Now we have sent down to thee this Book comprising the truth, fulfilling that which was revealed before it of the Book and as a guardian over it. *Judge, therefore, between them by that which Allah has sent down,* and follow not their vain desires in preference to the truth that has come to thee...*Judge between them by that which Ailah has sent down,* and follow not their vain desires, and be on thy guard against them lest they should involve thee in trouble aud lead thee away from part of that which Allah has sent down to thee (5 : 49.50).

So it is imperative that judgement must be by that which Allah has sent down. The question for determination, therefor, is : What has Allah sent down in the context of punishment for adultery ? The answer must be sought in the Holy Quran, inasmuch as it comprises all that was sent down to the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) by Allah. The Holy Quran's answer is set forth in verses 2-3 of Chapter 24, revealed in the fifth year of the Hegira, which run as follows :

This is a Surah which We have sent down and which We have made obligatory ; and We have sent down therein clear commandments that you may take heed. Flog the adulteress and the adulterer, each one of them, with a hundred stripes, and let not pity for them restrain you from executing the judgment of Allah, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. Let a party of the believers witness their punishment.

This is clear, definite and emphatic ; there is no room for evasion, modification or substitution. This is what is "sent down", it is "made obligatory", it is a "clear commandmet".

It may be observed that in the idiom of the Holy Quran the expression "*zina*" comprises both adultery and fornication (17 : 33 ; 25 : 69 ; 60 : 13). It may also be noted that death by stoning is not prescribed by the Quran as a penalty for any offence whatever.

Then on what basis is it contended that the punishment of a married person who is guilty of adultery is death by stoning ?

It is very difficult to discover any consistent basis for such a contention. In view of what has been set out above the contention becomes an absurdity and the refutation of an absurdity may appear to be a futile exercise. Before we enter upon such an exercise we may draw attention to certain verses of the Holy Quran which exclude death as the penalty for adultery. The verse which prescribes flogging as the penalty for adultery (24 : 3), is followed immendiately by the verse which forbids a believer marrying one who has been guilty of adultery (24 : 4). If the penalty for adultery was death, there could be no possibility of marriage with one guilty of adultery.

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If a freed-woman marries and is thereafter guily of misbehaviour, her punishment would be half of that prescribed for a freewoman (4 : 26). Should such a one be guilty of adultery what would be her penalty? Obviously it could not be death divided by half!

The main contention of the advocates of the sterner penalty is that a specific verse prescribing that penalty had in fact been revealed, and though its recitation was not adhered to, yet it continued to be enforced in practice. Such a contention is utterly untenable. It runs counter to the divine guarantee of the integrity of the text of the Holy Quran. No such verse is to be found in any written or printed copy of the Holy Quran, nor is it recited by any *hafiz* of the Holy Quran. There is no evidence whatever that such a verse had ever found place in any copy of the Holy Quran. Any such verse would be contradictory of verse 3 of Chapter 24 of the Holy Quran, and there can be no contradiction in the Holy Quran. A contradiction would negative the Divine authorship of the Holy Quran (4 : 83).

Another consideration that would be equally decisive against the genuineness of the alleged verse would be the supposed date of its revelation. The only indication of that, as will presently be seen, is that it was part of Chapter 33 (Surah Ahzab). That would seem to make it prior to Chapter

24. In such case the subsequent revelation of 24 : 3 would have abrogated it. But assuming that the revelation of the alleged verse were attributed to a time subsequent to the revelation of 24 : 3 the situation would be that the abrogated verse continued to be recited as an obligatory commandment of Allah and held its place in the Holy Quran and the abrogating verse ceased to be recited and was forgotten ! The whole thing is ridiculous and is an affront to the integrity of the Holy Quran.

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Here is the most circumstantial account of the supposed revelation of this mysterious verse : Dhar bin Jaish has related : I was asked by Ubay bin Ka'ab : Do you know how many verses were comprised in Surah Ahzab ? I replied : Seventy-two or seventy-three. He said : No, it comprised as many verses as are comprised in Surah Baqarah, and among them was the verse prescribing the penalty of stoning to death which we used to recite. I enquired : How did that verse run ? He replied : It ran : Should an old man and an old woman be guilty of adultery, stone them to death. This is a penalty prescribed by Allah, the Mighty, the Wise (Al-Itqan fi Uloomil Quran Vol. 2, p. 25).

The clumsy absurdity of this narrative is patent. An attempt is here made to reconcile the alleged verse with 24:3. According to this untenable version 24 : 3 was applicable only to unmarried offenders. There is no warrant for this construction. In the idiom of the Holy Quran the expression *"zina"* applies to all illicit sexual intercourse, without distinction between married and unmarried offenders. In the alleged verse itself the same expression is applied for the connotation of the offence mentioned therein. It runs : Should an old man and an old woman commit "zina".

Further, the alleged verse cannot be construed as applying to married offenders. The expression *"shaikh"* and *"shaikhah"* employed in the verse do not connote "married man" and "married woman". The verse is a crude concoction by someone unfamiliar with Arabic idiom. Thus by its very

language it defeats its purpose. It is a contradiction of 24 : 3 and as such cannot be tolerated.

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The enormity of the statement set out in Al-Itqan does not, however, stop there. It affirms that Surah Ahzab (Chapter 33) originally comprised as many verses as are comprised in Surah Baqarah, and that *one* of the missing verses of Surah Ahzab prescribed the penalty of death for aged persons guilty of adultery. Surah Ahzab comprises seventy three verses, exclusive of Bismillah, while Surah Baqarah comrises 286 verses, exclusive of Bismillah. Thus according to the statement relied on by advocates of the severe penalty for adultery, as many as 213 verses are missing from Surah Ahzab ! That is a demonstrably false statement. Such is the evidence on the basis of which a clear, emphatic and obligatory commandment of the Holy Quran is sought to be perverted.

Another ridiculous statement in support of the alleged missing verse is attributed to Hazrat Ayesha, wife of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) in Sunan Ibn Majah, one of the six authoritative compilations of *Hadis*. Its substance is that when the Holy Quran was being compiled no authority could be found for two alleged verses, one of which was the verse prescribing death by stoning as the penalty of adultery. In their perplexity some of the Companions had recourse to Hazrat Ayesha and mentioned the problem to her. She remarked : These two verses were set out in a copy of the Holy Quran which I possessed, and which I preserved below my sofa. When the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) died, we were all taken up by the tragedy, and unperceived by us a domestic she-goat entered my chamber and chewed up and devoured that copy of the Holy Quran ! The utter baselessness of the case of the advocates of the death penalty for adultery is miserably exposed by this truly cock-and-bull tale.

So much for the testimony of Hazrat Ayesha. Recourse is also had to the testimony of Hazrat Umar, the second Khalifah, who is supposed to have affirmed the existence of the alleged verse. Someone said to him : You say that such

a verse had been revealed and used to be recited during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet .(peace be on him). If that is so, why do you not inscribe it in the Holy Quran ? He replied : Were it not that people might say that I had made an addition to the Book of Allah, I would inscribe it (Tafseer Kabir by Imam Fakhruddin Razi, vol. 32, p. 134). This supposed observation by Hazrat Umar is self-contradictory. If in fact the alleged verse had been revealed, it was a part of the Holy Quran, its ommission from the written text was a serious deficiency, its inscription in the written text at the instance of Hazrat Umar would have been a most laudable act and would not have been open to criticism. This shows that that the entire incident is a concocton.

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Finally the advocates of the penalty of death for adultery seek support from what they describe as the practice of the Prophet (peace be on him). Now it is fundamental that there can be no conflict between "that which Allah has sent down" and the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). He was commanded : Now We have sent down to thee this Book comprising the truth, fulfilling that which was revealed before it of the Book, and as a guardian over it. Judge, therefore, between them by that which Allah has sent down, and follow not their vain desires in preference to the truth which has come to thee (5 : 49). Judge between them by that which Allah has sent down, and follow not their vain desires, and be on thy guard against them lest they should involve thee in trouble and lead thee away from part of that which Allah has sent down to thee (5 : 50). Therefore, he could not possibly have departed from "that which Allah had sent down". Any affirmation to the contrary must be rejected out of hand as false. He had himself warned : Should anything be attributed to me which is in conflict with the Book of Allah, be sure it is not true.

Peer Mohammad Karam Shah in his book sunnate Khairal Anam (p. 243) has stated : A judgement of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) is a judgement of the Book of Allah, even

when its basis is not mentioned in the Book of Allah. This is most misleading statement. The correct position is that every judgement of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) was in accord with the Book of Allah. Any affirmation to the contrary is false and must be rejected as such.

It is related of Hazrat Ali that he sentenced a woman who was held guilty of adultery to a hundred stripes "in accord with the Book of Allah" and thereafter to be stoned to death "in accord with the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him)." This statement attributes something to Hazrat Ali which amounts to gross defamation of him and of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). It assumes that Hazrat Ali realised that the penalty prescribed by the Holy Quran for the offence was a hundred stripes; nevertheless he subjected the culprit to double punishment because of the supposed unjustified practice of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him).

What was the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) in this regard? It may be taken as established that the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) did sentence persons guilty of adultery, both Jews and Muslims, to death by stoning. As regards the Jews, he was bound by the Pact of Medina to judge according to the Torah, and the Torah prescribes death by stoning as the penalty for adultery. The revelation of 24 : 3 made no difference in this respect, as the Jews continued subject to the Torah. The stoning of Jewish culprits, however, has no relevance to the cases of Muslim offenders. So far as they were concerned no penalty was prescribed in the Holy Quran for the offence of adultery till 24 : 3 was revealed in the fifth year of the Hegira. Till then the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) in the cases of Muslim offenders also conformed to the injunction of the Torah. The revelation of 24 : 3 put an end to that practice.

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Some advocates of the capital penalty for adultery do not accept that before the revelation of 24 : 3, the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) imposed that penalty on Muslim offenders by virtue of the injunction of the Torah in that behalf. They

contend that the capital penalty had already been prescribed for adultery in the Holy Quran. This is utterly untenable for several reasons. But assuming that such was the case, it must follow that any such provision was abrogated by the subsequent revelation of the clear and definite terms of the commandment set out in 24 : 3.

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As a matter of fundamental principle the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) could not even be imagined to be in conflict with divine command. Therefore, the burden is very heavy on those who rely on such practice to establish beyond doubt that the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) sentenced a Muslim found guilty of adultery to death by stoning *after* the revelation of 24 : 3. Not one such instance has been established, nor can or could it be established. A mere affirmation that the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) sentenced a person guilty of adultery to death by stoning is utterly irrelevant. First, there must be *proof* that the offender was a Muslim and not a Jew. Finally it must be established beyond the shadow of a doubt that the event took place after the revelation of 24 : 3. There is no such case. Consider the following : Khalid Shaibani asked Abdullah bin Abi Aufa, a Companion, did the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) order anyone to be stoned to death ? He answered : Yes. Asked : Was it before the revelation of Surah Noor or after ? His answer was : That I do not know !

The matter touches the honour of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him). We must be extremely jealous of it. No casual, irresponsible statement can be suffered to reflect on it.

To sum up : These are the fundamentals :

1. Surah Noor lays down the penalty for the offence of adultery, and makes it obligatory.

2. Never was any verse revealed in conflict with 24 : 3. There is no such verse in the Holy Quran. Any affirmation to the contrary would put the integrity of the text of the

Holy Quarn in doubt, and would be in conflict with the divine guarantee set out in 75 : 17-20 and 15 : 10.

3. The practice of the Holy Prophet (peace be on him) was in complete accord with 24 : 3. Any statement to the contrary must be rejected as false.

Our last word is : All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

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Printed at the Nusrat Art Press by Malik Basharat Ahmad, and published by M. Masud Ahmad B. A. Rabwah, Pakistan, from the office of the Review of Religions, Darulsadar, Rabwah.